ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED WOLLER RANCH-HILLS AT RIVER MIST SUBDIVISION, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS

Prepared for

CENTEX HOMES
1354 North Loop 1604 East, Suite 108
San Antonio, Texas 78232

Prepared by

Michael Chavez and Thanet Skoglund

SWCA® ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS
4407 Monterey Oaks Blvd.
Building 1, Suite 110
Austin, Texas 78749
www.swca.com

Principal Investigator

Brett A. Houk

SWCA Project Number 7843-004-AUS
SWCA Cultural Resources Report No. 04-133

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ABSTRACT

On behalf of Centex Homes, SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted an intensive cultural resources survey of 90 acres of the proposed Woller Ranch-Hills at River Mist development project area in northwestern San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The residential development would include the construction of access roads and streets, the installation of utilities, and the subdivision of the property into individual lots. The survey was conducted to assist the client in complying with requirements of the City of San Antonio's Historic Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code.

Pedestrian survey was used to examine all portions of the project area that appeared relatively undisturbed and was supplemented with vehicular reconnaissance of all recently cleared areas. During the survey, the field crew excavated six shovel tests in areas of potential soil deposition. The shovel tests confirmed that the project area contained upland soils with no potential for buried cultural resources.

The survey documented one previously unrecorded archaeological site, 41BX1591. Site 41BX1591 is a historic debris pile, containing mid-twentieth century domestic refuse, primarily bottles and cans, mixed with modern trash. The site does not warrant further investigation.

Based on the results of the survey, future development of the property would not impact any significant cultural resources. Therefore, SWCA recommends to the Historic Preservation Office that the project be allowed to proceed as planned.

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

PROJECT TITLE: Woller Ranch/Hills at River Mist Archaeological Survey.

SWCA PROJECT NUMBER: 7843-004-AUS.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project included a background records review and pedestrian survey with shovel testing of an area proposed for residential development in Bexar County, Texas.

LOCATION: The project area is located in San Antonio, Texas near the intersection of Loop 1604 and Bandera Road. The project is just north of Prue Road and is bound on the east and west by existing residential development.

NUMBER OF ACRES SURVEYED: Approximately 90 acres.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Brett A. Houk.

DATES OF WORK: March 30, 2004.

PURPOSE OF WORK: The client is fulfilling the requirements of the City of San Antonio's Historic Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code.

NUMBER OF SITES: One (41BX1591).

ELIGIBILITY OF SITES: The site is not considered eligible for listing on the NRHP or for designation as an SAL.

CURATION: No artifacts were collected during these investigations.

COMMENTS: Based on the results of the survey, archaeological clearance is recommended for the development of the project area as proposed.

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of Centex Homes, SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted an intensive cultural resources survey of 90 acres of the proposed Woller Ranch and River Mist development project area in northwestern San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The residential development would include the construction of access roads and streets, the installation of utilities, and the subdivision of the property into individual lots.

The survey was conducted to assist the client in complying with requirements of the City of San Antonio's Historic Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code. Brett A. Houk served as the project's Principal Investigator. The fieldwork was conducted by Mike Chavez, Thanet Skoglund, and Stacey Stoddard. SWCA conducted the survey on March 30, 2004.

PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION

The project area is located in the northwest-central portion of Bexar County within the city limits of San Antonio (Figure 1). The irregularly shaped project area is approximately 1 mile west of the Loop 1604 and Bandera Road intersection. Prue Road, which runs east-west, borders the project area to the south. The surrounding areas are occupied by recent housing developments that border the project area to the east and west.

Much of the project area occupies upland terrain, with a prominent hill in the northern end of the project area. French Creek, which flows from northwest to southeast, passes through a small portion of the project area and continues west of the western boundary.

Aside from a large cleared field that composes the northwest portion of the project area and the hilltop, the project area is marked by thick vegetation with a canopy of oak and cedar trees. The cleared field is covered by heavy grasses and appears to be an abandoned agricultural field. The hilltop, as seen on aerial photos, appeared to be relatively free of vegetation prior to recent development clearing.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

GEOLOGY

In the northern half of the project area, the highest elevations occupy Upper Cretaceous Buda Limestone (Barnes 1983). Mid-level elevations occupy the Upper Cretaceous Del Rio Clay formation. Along French Creek and the western edge of the project area, Edwards Limestone occurs. Edwards Limestone frequently contains chert nodules, an important lithic resource to prehistoric inhabitants of the area. An east-west fault line passes through the project area, resulting in Upper Cretaceous Austin Chalk occupying the higher elevations in the southern half of the project area, rather than the Buda Limestone found in the northern half.

SOILS

The majority of the project area contains Tarrant Series soils (Taylor et al. 1991:Sheet Number 27). The northern hill has Tarrant association, rolling soils, and the southern upland area has Tarrant association, gently undulating soils. Both types are dark colored, very shallow, clayey, and developed over hard limestone (Taylor et al. 1991:30, 55). The Tarrant soils have scattered stones on the surface and in the surface layer. The northwestern portion of the project area, which is just east of French Creek, contains Crawford clay, 0 to 1 percent slopes (Taylor et al. 1991:Sheet number 27). This soil consists of red to reddish brown noncalcalcareous clays (Taylor et al. 1991:13). Encircling the

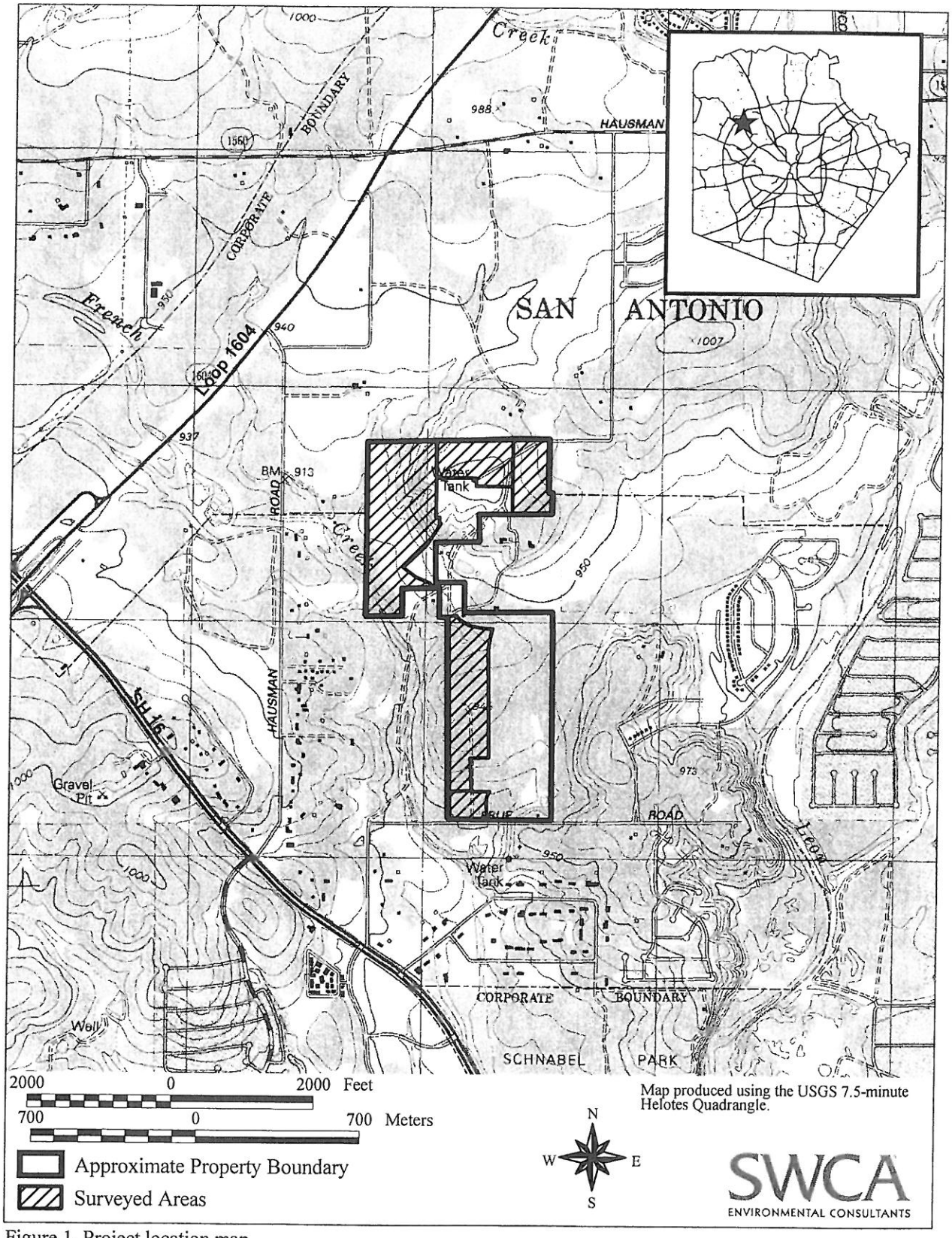


Figure 1. Project location map.

northern hill is a thin band of Krum complex soils (Taylor et al. 1991:Sheet number 27). These soils are deep, moderately permeable, calcareous, grayish-brown to dark-gray clays and clay loams (Taylor et al. 1991:58). In the extreme northwestern portion of the project area, Patrick soils, 1 to 3 percent slopes are mapped along French Creek (Taylor et al. 1991:Sheet number 27). These soils are found on terraces along streams draining the limestone prairies (Taylor et al. 1991:61).

VEGETATION

Bexar County and the project area lie on the cusp of the Edwards Plateau, Blackland Prairie, and South Texas Plains vegetative regions as defined by Gould (1975). The Balcones Escarpment forms a sharp boundary in floral patterns between the thin-soiled limestone uplands and the wide coastal plains. The Edwards Plateau is dominated by a mixed live oak (*Quercus virginiana*)/Ashe juniper (*Juniperus ashei*) woodland interspersed with occasional grassy openings. Other tree species present in low densities throughout upland areas of the project area include cedar elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*), sugar hackberry (*Celtis laevigata*), and Texas oak (*Quercus texana*). Shrub density varies between low to dense in upland areas. Species occurring in low densities include Texas persimmon (*Diospyros texana*), agarita (*Berberis trifoliolata*), white brush (*Aloysia gratissima*), elbowbush (*Forestiera pubescens*), and prickly pear (*Opuntia* spp.) with thick, mixed grasses in areas (Van Auken 1988).

CULTURAL HISTORY

The project area lies at the interface of two broad archaeological regions, South Texas and Central Texas. As evident in the artifact assemblages from the San Antonio area, cultural influences fluctuated over time. The following culture history emphasizes Central Texas regional patterns as the best fit for the study area, although reference is made to important developments and trends in South Texas. The following discussion draws primarily from the chronologies proposed by Collins (1995), Johnson and Goode (1994), and Black (1989) for Central Texas, with observations from Hester (1995) for South Texas. The cultural sequence is divided into four periods: Paleoindian, Archaic, Late Prehistoric, and Historic. The Archaic period is subdivided into four subperiods: Early, Middle, Late, and Transitional.

PALEOINDIAN PERIOD

Paleoindian artifacts and sites date from about 11,500–8800 B.P. and are not uncommon in Central Texas (Collins 1995). The period begins during the close of the Pleistocene with the earliest evidence of humans in the Central Texas region. Diagnostic artifacts of the period include lanceolate shaped, fluted projectile points such as Clovis, Folsom, and Plainview. These projectile points were hafted onto wooden spears, launched from atlatls (spearthrowers), and often used to hunt big game such as mammoth, mastodons, bison, camel, and horse (Black 1989). During the Paleoindian period, subsistence strategies gradually changed to include increased harvesting of flora and small game as the big game died off and the climate warmed following the end of the Pleistocene ice age. Most Paleoindian artifacts in the area are recovered as either isolated surface finds or within surface lithic scatters lacking good stratigraphic context (e.g., Howard 1974; Meltzer and Bever 1995).

ARCHAIC PERIOD

As the Paleoindian period came to an end, humans began to harvest more intensively local floral and faunal resources (Collins 1995). Material culture became more diverse,

and the use of burned rock middens and ovens became widespread. This period is known as the Archaic and dates from approximately 8800 to 1200 B.P. in Central Texas (Collins 1995; Johnson and Goode 1994). While Collins (1995) and Johnson and Goode (1994) subdivide the Archaic into Early, Middle, and Late subperiods, this report recognizes the Transitional Archaic as the final subperiod of the Archaic.

EARLY ARCHAIC

Early Archaic artifacts and sites date from about 8800 to 6000 B.P. (Collins 1995). Once thought to be Paleoindian in age, some unstemmed point types such as Angostura have recently been recognized as the first Early Archaic diagnostic styles (Collins 1995). By about 8000 B.P., these points were replaced by stemmed varieties such as Early Split Stem, Martindale, and Uvalde (Black 1989; Collins 1995). Most sites were open campsites, although cave sites have also been found (Collins 1995). Current site distribution data suggest that Early Archaic peoples were concentrated along the eastern and southern margins of Edwards Plateau in areas with more stable water sources (Collins 1995; McKinney 1981). Specialized tools, perhaps used in woodworking, known as Guadalupe and Neuces bifaces, were prevalent in this period (Collins 1995). While subsistence data are sparse, it appears that people were hunting deer and other small animals, fishing, and cooking bulbs in earth ovens (Collins 1995). This strategy evolved, in part, due to the extinction of megafauna and the changing climate at the beginning of the Holocene (McKinney 1981).

MIDDLE ARCHAIC

Middle Archaic artifacts and sites date from about 6000 to 4000 B.P. Characteristic Middle Archaic projectile points include Bell, Andice, Taylor, Nolan, and Travis, several of which are deeply notched (Black 1989). These artifacts could have served as knives and projectile points. Bison were hunted intensively at the start of the Middle Archaic, but, as the climate became drier, a reliance on dry climate plants such as sotol probably became common. The end of the Middle Archaic may have been the most xeric conditions ever in Central Texas (Collins 1995). The climatic change was accompanied by a technological change as Nolan and Travis points, which are thick and have narrow blades, first appear in the archaeological record (Collins 1995). Burned rock middens and earth ovens first appeared ca. 5000 B.P. and became increasingly common, although their exact functions may have varied based on the culture and environment (Johnson and Goode 1994). Representative sites of the Texas Middle Archaic include the Landslide, Wounded Eye, Gibson, and Panther Springs sites (Collins 1995).

LATE ARCHAIC

Late Archaic artifacts and sites date from about 4000 to 2250 B.P. The period began with very xeric conditions but gradually became more mesic (Collins 1995). Characteristic dart point types include Bulverde, Pedernales, Marshall, and Marcos (Collins 1995). Increasingly complex and sedentary cultural manifestations first appeared in the Late Archaic. Sites of the Late Archaic are very common and include burned rock middens, open campsites, and lithic procurement sites. Population increases are indicated by large cemeteries. Also, trade and exchange networks between cultures appear to have increased in complexity based on the presence of exotic goods in sites and cemeteries (Black 1989). Bement (1991) interprets the evidence for group investment in the Thunder Valley sinkhole cemetery, dated to 2900 B.P. based on stratigraphy, to indicate that groups were declaring control over a

particularly territorial range during the Late Archaic.

TRANSITIONAL ARCHAIC

As Collins (1995:384–385) notes, "diverse and comparatively complex archeological manifestations toward the end of the Late Archaic attest to the emergence of kinds of human conduct without precedent in the area." This period (2250–1250 B.P.) is referred to as the Transitional Archaic (Turner and Hester 1993). During the Transitional Archaic, smaller dart point forms such as Darl, Ensor, Fairland, and Frio were developed (Turner and Hester 1993). These points were probably ancestral to the first Late Prehistoric arrow point types and may have overlapped temporally with them (Hester 1995). Several researchers believe that the increased interaction between groups at the end of the Late Archaic was an important catalyst for cultural change (Collins 1995; Johnson and Goode 1994).

LATE PREHISTORIC

By the end of the Transitional Archaic, the bow and arrow technologies were introduced, indicated by the increasingly smaller size of projectile points. The subsequent period is now commonly referred to as the Late Prehistoric period (Black 1989; Collins 1995; Turner and Hester 1993). The Late Prehistoric period dates from 1250 to 260 B.P. (Collins 1995). Characteristic artifacts include small arrowpoints as well as a variety of specific use tools. The Austin and Toyah intervals of the Late Prehistoric, originally recognized by Suhm (1960) and Jelks (1962), remain accepted divisions for the period. These style intervals may represent distinct cultural entities (e.g., Johnson 1994), although others challenge this view (e.g., Black and Creel 1997).

During the earlier Austin interval, burned rock midden use may have reached its maximum based on recent conclusions by Black and Creel (1997). Characteristic arrow point types of the Austin interval include Scallorn and Edwards (Collins 1995; Turner and Hester 1993). By the Toyah interval, plainware ceramics appeared, indicating possible influence in the Central Texas region from ceramic producing cultures to the east and north (Perttula et al. 1995). Contrary to bog pollen data (Collins et al. 1993), data from Hall's Cave in Kerr County indicate that the climate of Central Texas began to dry around 1000 B.P. (Toomey et al. 1993). This drying trend may have resulted in a change in vegetation that made central and south Texas more conducive to bison migration into the area, and bison remains in archaeological sites in the region became common after 750 B.P. (Dillehay 1974; Huebner 1991).

Most Toyah sites have the distinctive Perdiz arrow point, and some sites also have bison processing tool kits. This technological change has been interpreted as the spread of an ethnic group by Johnson (1994) and as the spread of technological ideas in response to opportunities provided by an increased bison population in the Late Prehistoric by Ricklis (1992). Increasing complexity in subsistence patterns and very high prehistoric populations are postulated for the Late Prehistoric period (Black 1989; Collins 1995).

HISTORIC PERIOD

The Historic period (beginning ca. 260 B.P. or A.D. 1690) differs from the prehistoric periods in that it can be investigated from both archaeological remains and documentary records. From just after A.D. 1550 to the late 1600s, European incursions into South and Central Texas were rare, and the first Europeans did not settle in the region until around A.D. 1700 (Taylor 1996). Although

the Historic period theoretically begins in Texas with the arrival of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca and the survivors of the Narvaez expedition along the Texas coast in 1528, the bulk of the inhabitants were native Americans until the late eighteenth century. Spanish incursions into the region from the late seventeenth century on left valuable information on native groups and tribes. One such group, the Payaya, lived in the area of the modern city of San Antonio and are described as a hunting and gathering group organized in extended family units camping near springs and streams where nuts, pecan trees, and woods were abundant. Bison were hunted on open grasslands between the San Antonio and Colorado Rivers for their meat and hides (Hester 1989:80). The Payaya may have occupied several sites in a roughly 50 km "summer" range and had occasional contact with other groups as they traveled to and from resource camps seasonally (Campbell 1983:349–351).

The Payaya sought protection from the Apache at newly established Spanish missions, settlements, and presidios like the Mission San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo) and the Presidio San Antonio de Bexar founded on May 5, 1718, by Don Martín de Alarcón near the headwaters of San Pedro Creek (Chipman 1992:117). The Spanish in turn, actively recruited the Native Americans to help bolster their settlements on this northern frontier in response to French incursions led by La Salle. The Spanish presence around San Antonio is best seen as part of the complex European political picture of the time. Spearheading the renewed Spanish interest with leadership and funding was the captain, general and governor of Coahuila and Texas, Joseph de Azlor y Virto de Vera, Marques de San Miguel de Aguayo, who established San Antonio as the regional hub of northern Spanish settlement in Texas at this time (Cox 1997; Fox 1989).

After the establishment of San Antonio in the 1720s, the settlement effectively developed into a provincial Spanish town in the eighteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, the viceroyalty of New Spain gained independence from the Spanish empire partly due to the Napoleonic invasion of Spain, and the nation of Mexico was born. To help facilitate settlement of Texas, the region was opened up to Anglo settlers from the United States led by Stephen F. Austin. Eventually, this led to an independence movement by Texas area Anglo and Mexican citizens in the 1830s (Fox 1989). The well-known story of the battle of the Alamo and Texas independence is beyond the scope of discussion here, but the city of San Antonio played an integral part for both Mexican and Texan forces during the War for Texas Independence. Following this period, San Antonio remained a significant provincial city, growing and developing under Mexican, Texan, and American national policy in the nineteenth century (Fox 1989).

Anglo-period settlement began in the nineteenth century with significant historical events including the initial 1820s settlements, the Texas War for Independence in 1836, the incorporation of the Republic of Texas into the United States in 1845, the War with Mexico a few years after incorporation, and the U. S. Civil War of 1861–1865. During the War with Mexico, San Antonio served as a major hub for General Zachary Taylor's invasion of Mexico. Many of the military commanders of the U. S. Civil War were stationed and operated out of San Antonio at this time (Taylor 1996). San Antonio also served as a communications and shipping hub for goods imported from Mexico for the Confederate war effort in the early 1860s (Taylor 1996).

The first railway came through the city in 1877, bringing with it a plethora of job

opportunities and commercial ventures. The railroad brought about a large shift in settlement patterns, as the eastern neighborhoods which were once multi-ethnic, became popular among African-Americans who worked as porters, mechanics, and loading crew for the growing railways. Wealthy citizens moved from the noise and traffic of downtown to quieter suburbs to the north and west. Through the 1880s and 1890s, as the economy of the city prospered through tourism, population of the city doubled from 53,321 to over 100,000 people (Fox et al. 1997:31).

Throughout the early twentieth century, trade, transportation, and tourism continued to bring economic prosperity to the city. The establishment of Fort Sam Houston and the activity surrounding World War I and World War II kept the railway system active and commercial activity in the east prospered. Through the remainder of the twentieth century, the city expanded rapidly but the downtown portion retained the city plan established in the nineteenth century.

METHODS

BACKGROUND REVIEW

SWCA conducted a thorough background archaeological literature and records search of the project area. An SWCA archaeologist searched site files and maps at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) and the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Texas Historic Sites Atlas (Atlas) online database for any previously recorded surveys and historic or prehistoric archaeological sites located in or near the project area. In addition to identifying recorded archaeological sites, the review included the following types of information on the Atlas: National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) properties, State Archeological Landmarks (SALs), Official Texas Historical Markers, Registered Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs), cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys. The archaeologist also examined the following sources: the *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas*, the *Geologic Atlas of Texas*, the Helotes, Texas USGS 7.5-minute topographic map of the project area, and the Helotes Digital Ortho Quadrangle (DOQ). The review of the aerial photograph was done to assist in determining whether any standing buildings are located on the property and utilized maps and photos on the City of San Antonio's GIS Mapping Application, an online resource (http://maps.sanantonio.gov/website/COSAMaps/viewer.asp).

FIELD METHODS

The field survey was designed to be of sufficient intensity to determine the nature, extent, and, if possible, significance of any cultural resources located within the proposed project area. The survey was designed to meet all THC minimum archaeological survey standards. To conduct the survey, the field crew of three archaeologists walked transects, spaced 15 m apart from one another, across the entire project area with the exception of areas that had been cleared, which were investigated by vehicular reconnaissance (Figure 2).

Because of exposed bedrock on the surface of almost the entire the project area, the THC's standard of one shovel test per 2 acres on projects of this size was not met. SWCA excavated a total of six shovel tests during the survey of the Woller Ranch- River Mist project area. Three shovel tests were excavated in the area directly adjacent to French Creek, an area mapped in the soil survey as containing Patrick soils. Three additional shovel tests were placed in an open field where exposed bedrock was not visible on the surface.

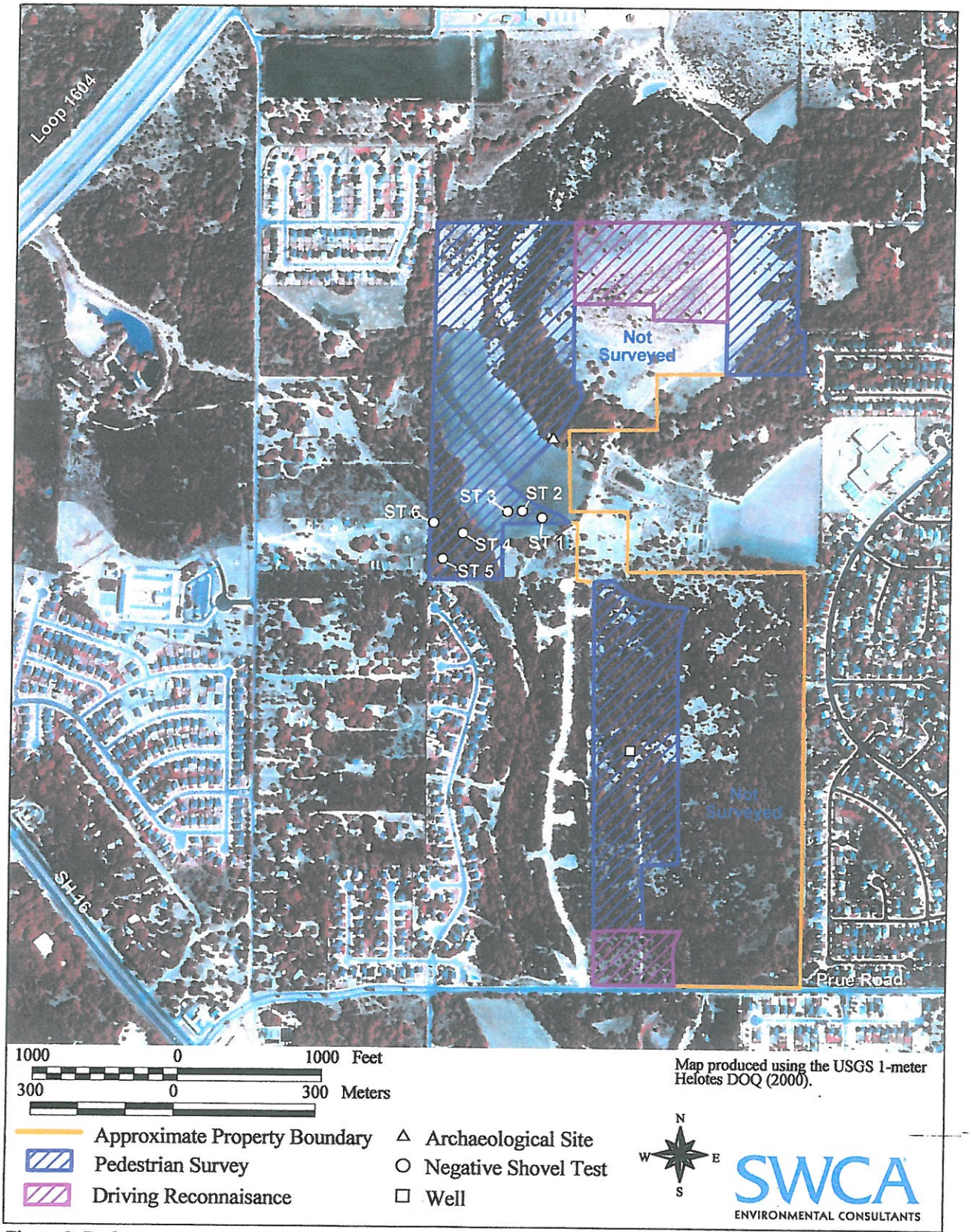


Figure 2. Project area map.

Shovel tests were excavated until clay or bedrock was encountered. The matrix was screened through ¼-inch mesh. The location of each shovel test was plotted using a GPS receiver, and each test was recorded on appropriate project field forms.

RESULTS

BACKGROUND REVIEW

The background literature review revealed that the project area has not been previously surveyed for archaeological resources and that no archaeological sites have been recorded within the project area boundaries. Several surveys have taken place nearby. A survey is indicated on the Atlas along Bandera Road, south of the project area, but no information about that survey was available online. A second survey took place along Leon Creek, east of the project, in 1998 (Cargill 1999). Archaeologists from the Center for Archaeological Research (CAR) surveyed Leon Creek from Bandera Road to Babcock Road for the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department. While that survey did not record any new sites near the Woller Ranch-River Mist project area, it revisited 41BX56 and 41BX57, two sites recorded in 1971 that are approximately 1 km southeast of the project area (Cargill 1999). Site 41BX56 is a large hilltop campsite with Early Archaic dart points noted on the site form (TARL, 41BX56 site form). Site 41BX57, about 250 m upstream of 41BX56, is an Early Archaic or Late Paleoindian "hunting camp" (TARL, 41BX57 site form).

The nearest site to the project area is 41BX370, which is located along French Creek, approximately 100 m south of Prue Road. It is a large open campsite on the first terrace of the creek. Twenty-three projectile points, 20 assorted bifaces, and part of a brass sword were noted on the site form (TARL).

Site 41BX69 is located approximately 1 km west of the project area near Loop 1604 along French Creek. This small site was apparently disturbed by construction along Loop 1604. It contained flakes, burned rock, unifaces, and one alternately beveled biface. The site was not stratified (TARL, 41BX69 site form).

There are no recorded NRHP properties, SALs, Official Texas Historical Markers, RTHLs, or cemeteries in the project area, and none are located within 1 mile of the project area.

FIELD SURVEY

On March 30, 2004, three SWCA archaeologists conducted a pedestrian and vehicular survey of the project area. The pedestrian survey was performed in areas that were relatively undisturbed. The vehicular survey was used in areas that have been significantly disturbed by recent construction activities.

GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS

A high level of disturbance was observed in much of the project area due to recent construction activities associated with the residential subdivision development. Several large areas have been completely cleared of vegetation and covered with fill in preparation for construction (Figure 3). These areas include the hill that dominates the northern portion of the project area. Construction impacts in the southern portion of the project area were less severe than in the north, but included vegetation clearing and ground disturbance in areas that will be used as subdivision roads. In addition, an area at the extreme southern end of the project area is severely disturbed. This area is currently used as a parking and staging area for construction. A vehicular reconnaissance was conducted in

Figure 3. Disturbance in northern portion of the project area.

the northernmost and southernmost areas to document these impacts (see Figure 2).

The pedestrian survey examined all areas lacking, or exhibiting only minimal, disturbance. Exposed bedrock was observed throughout the project area confirming that most of the project area has little potential for buried deposits due to its upland setting (Figure 4). Initially, areas in the northwest portion of the project area near French Creek were thought to have the potential to contain depositional soils. However, the investigation of this area revealed that the creek is an upland drainage with exposed bedrock in its channel and on the surface of both banks.

Six shovel tests were excavated in the area near French Creek (see Figure 2, Table 1). Three of the shovel tests (STs 1–3) were in an open field northeast of the creek (Figure 5). This area was one of the few locations where bedrock was not visible on the surface. These three shovel tests revealed compact, dark brown loam in the upper 25–30 cm over an increasingly compact clay loam layer grading into clay. Remnant furrows in the field provide evidence of previous plowing, and the upper loamy layer likely represents a plow zone. The remaining three shovel tests (STs 4–6) were excavated directly adjacent to French Creek and were used to sample both banks. These shovel tests were extremely shallow and encountered bedrock at 5–8 cm below the surface. None of the shovel tests discovered cultural material. The shovel tests confirmed that the project area contains shallow soils with little potential for containing buried archaeological sites.

No artifacts, except for those recorded as site 41BX1591 (discussed below), were observed on the surface of the project area. Several small outbuildings and a well or water tank were encountered in the southern half of the project area (see location on Figure 2). The small outbuildings were built of cedar posts and corrugated tin, and both they and the well appeared to be modern constructions.

SITE 41BX1591

The survey documented one previously unrecorded site, 41BX1591, in the center of the project area. The site is southwest of the base of the prominent hill that dominates the northern portion of the project area (see Figure 2). The site is bordered by a modern outbuilding, probably a hay barn, to the north and a construction road to the south. Farther south is an occupied residential ranch house and several additional outbuildings. The site measures 30 feet east-west by 36 feet north-south. The site itself contains little vegetation; the surrounding area is grassy with an oak canopy.

Site 41BX1591 is a historic debris pile of bottles, tin cans, and other domestic refuse (Figures 6 and 7). The historic debris dates to the mid-twentieth century. The pile contains approximately 80 percent modern debris and appears to have been utilized through the late twentieth century. Artifacts include soft drink bottles, medicine bottles, bleach bottles, cans–both hole-in-top (25 percent) and sanitary (75 percent)–historic ceramics, and license plates (from Texas, dated 1954 and 1956).

The origin of the refuse is more than likely the residential ranch house to the south, which appears in a soil survey aerial photograph from about 1960. As the ranch house is outside of the project area, it was not investigated. The residence appears to be part of Woller Ranch, established in the late nineteenth century.

The construction road to the south has impacted approximately 15 percent of the site along its southern edge, but otherwise the site is in relatively good condition. However, the

Figure 4. Exposed bedrock on the surface of the project area.

Table 1. Shovel Test Results

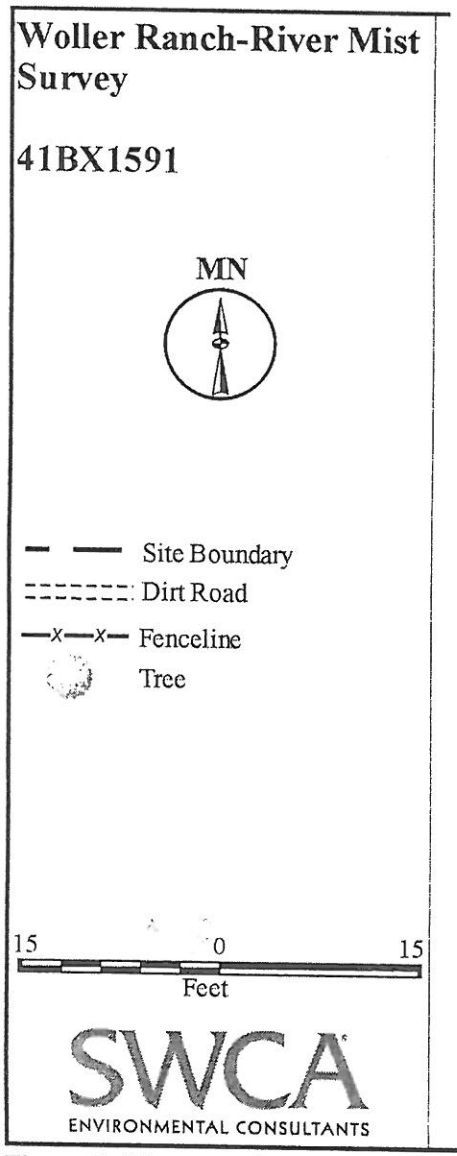
ST	Strata Depth (cmbs)	Soil Description	Artifacts
1	0-30	Dark Brown compact loam with 5% gravel inclusions.	None
	30-38	Dark Brown/Black very compact clay loam with increasing gravel size and content.	None
2	0-30	Dark Brown compact loamy soils mottled with reddish clay loam soils. 5% gravel inclusions. Increased clay content with depth.	None
3	0-25	Dark Brown compact loam.	None
	25-30	Dark Brown/Black very compact clay loam soils with < 5% small gravel inclusions.	None
4	0-7	Dark Brown clay loam over limestone bedrock. Increased gravel content with depth.	None
5	0-8	Dark Brown clay loam over limestone bedrock. Increased gravel content with depth.	None
6	0-5	Dark Brown clay loam over limestone bedrock. Increased gravel content with depth.	None

IMAGE RESTRICTED

Figure 5. Open field near French Creek where shovel tests were excavated.

IMAGE RESTRICTED

Figure 6. Overview of site 41BX1591.



ITEM INTENTIONALLY OMITTED

Figure 7. Site map of 41BX1591.

debris pile is an isolated feature, and the majority of its contents are less than 50 years old. Therefore, the site is considered to have low research value. Site 41BX1591 does not warrant official landmark designation. No further investigation at the site is recommended.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SWCA conducted an archaeological survey of approximately 90 acres at the Woller Ranch-Hills at River Mist project area in northwestern San Antonio. The investigations incorporated both pedestrian survey with shovel testing and vehicular reconnaissance to explore undisturbed and disturbed portions of the project area, respectively. The survey encountered exposed bedrock over the majority of the project area's surface, including along both banks of French Creek. Six shovel tests were excavated across the project area and revealed shallow clay loams overlying clay or bedrock. No artifacts were recovered from any of the shovel tests.

One site was recorded during the investigations. Site 41BX1591, in the central portion of the project area, is a historic debris pile. The site contained mid-twentieth century domestic refuse, primarily bottles and cans, mixed with modern trash. The research value of the site is considered low, and no further investigations are recommended. No artifacts were observed on the surface of the project area outside the boundaries of site 41BX1591.

Based on these results, SWCA recommends to the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) that the project be allowed to proceed as planned. If, however, any significant cultural resources are found during development, further disturbance or alteration in the vicinity of the discovery must be immediately stopped until the HPO can be afforded the opportunity to examine and evaluate the discovery to determine whether or not additional investigation or documentation, or avoidance, will be required per applicable city codes.

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